

minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to pay tribute to one of our Nation's greatest higher education leaders and a great advocate for accessible quality higher education. He is a dear friend and a colleague of mine for the last 40 years.

On June 30, Dr. William E. "Brit" Kirwan will retire after 12 years as chancellor of the University System of Maryland. Under his leadership, the University System has transformed from being a national leader in public higher education into a national model in several areas; these include campus diversity, academic innovation, and efforts to close the achievement gap.

There is, of course, a lot I could say, Mr. Speaker, to my colleagues about Dr. Kirwan's distinguished career and commitment to improving higher education across the country.

Mr. Speaker, on June 30, Dr. William E. "Brit" Kirwan, who has served as chancellor of the University System of Maryland (USM) for more than twelve years, will retire after a career dedicated to advancing higher education.

Dr. Kirwan has left his mark on academia and the State of Maryland in a way few others have. After a quarter-century as an educator and administrator at the University of Maryland, he was President of the University of Maryland, College Park, before serving as President of The Ohio State University. Later, he returned to Maryland to assume the position of USM Chancellor. Common threads throughout his fifty-one-year career in public higher education include an unwavering commitment to affordability, a passion for excellence, and a drive to increase access, especially for underrepresented minorities and low-income students.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kirwan's leadership has helped move the USM from a national leader in public higher education to a national model in several areas. The USM's groundbreaking Effectiveness and Efficiency (E&E) initiative—a reengineering of administrative and academic processes to cut costs and improve quality—has been profiled in national publications and specifically cited by President Obama. The "Closing the Achievement Gap" Initiative, which USM launched in 2007, targets the gap in college participation, retention, and graduation rates between low-income students, first-generation college students, and underrepresented minorities, on one hand, and the general student population on the other. With this enhanced focus, these gaps in diversity have been narrowed—and even eliminated—on some USM campuses.

As President of the University of Maryland, College Park, Dr. Kirwan helped make that institution one of the most diverse public research universities in the United States. As President of The Ohio State University, he made diversity a centerpiece of the University's Academic Plan. When he left Ohio State in 2002, the University added his name to its interdisciplinary research institute dedicated to understanding racial and ethnic disparities worldwide, now known as the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity.

Dr. Kirwan's effort to establish a productive working relationship with Maryland's elected officials is another testament to his leadership. By aligning higher education goals with state priorities, the USM has ush-

ered in an era of academic and research excellence, targeted workforce development, greater economic impact, and improved affordability. In fact, the average tuition for undergraduate in-state students at USM institutions, once the nation's seventh highest, has now dropped to twenty-sixth.

With the launch of its Course Redesign Initiative in 2006, the USM became the first university system in the nation to use innovative new technology to redesign entire courses. To facilitate academic transformation and excellence even further, in 2012 the USM established the Center for Academic Innovation (CAI) to develop, apply, and evaluate more ways to deliver high-quality courses optimizing technology and other resources system-wide. Today the USM is recognized as a national leader in the burgeoning academic innovation movement.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Kirwan's impact has also been felt beyond Maryland's borders. He currently serves or has served as Co-Chair of the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics; Chair of the College Board's Commission on Access, Admissions, and Success in Higher Education; a member of the Business-Higher Education Forum, and Chair of the National Research Council Board of Higher Education and the Workforce. Dr. Kirwan has also been called upon by U.S. Presidents from both parties to advise on national higher education efforts. His impact on higher education has been honored with two of the most prestigious awards in the field: the TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership (2010) and the Carnegie Corporation Leadership Award (2009).

Under Dr. Kirwan's leadership the USM has flourished, and his lifetime of achievement and service will be celebrated on April 18 at a special retirement gala that will raise endowment funds for the Center for Academic Innovation, which promises to continue exploring the themes of access, affordability, and excellence in higher education that have been hallmarks of his career.

I hope my colleagues in the House will join me in thanking Dr. Kirwan for fifty-one years of service to higher education in our country and congratulating him on his retirement.

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WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, March is Women's History Month, which honors and celebrates the struggles and achievements of American women throughout the history of the United States.

Since 1917, when Republican Representative Jeannette Rankin of Montana became the first woman to serve in Congress, 313 women have served as U.S. Representatives, Senators, or Delegates.

In 2014, the American people made history by electing a record number of women to Congress. In January, 12 new women were sworn in to the House of Representatives, joining 72 incumbents who won reelection. The number of women serving in the Senate has reached 20, and four of the five non-voting Delegates are women.

These women with rich perspectives and a commitment to good ideas and teamwork are changing the way Wash-

ington does business. The women of the 114th Congress are shaping our Nation, and it is an opportunity and responsibility that we take seriously.

HONORING NATIONAL WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH AND MAYOR JEAN STOTHERT

(Mr. ASHFORD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. ASHFORD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in observation of National Women's History Month. During this time, it is important to celebrate the achievements and contributions of women in our great Nation.

I am proud to recognize my friend, Mayor Jean Stothert, the 51st mayor of the great city of Omaha, Nebraska, and the first woman elected to this office.

In 1993, Mr. Speaker, Ms. Stothert moved to Nebraska, quickly embracing her new home. Her advocacy garnered an appointment to the Millard school board, a position to which she was re-elected three times.

Expanding her passion for service, she sought and won election to the Omaha City Council in 2009. With a strong work ethic and ambition, Mayor Stothert was elected mayor of the city of Omaha on May 14, 2013.

An illustration by our very famous editorial cartoonist Jeff Koterba of the Omaha World-Herald portrays Mayor Stothert breaking the proverbial glass ceiling in Omaha.

Good for her—she represents a phalanx of women in Omaha who are taking leadership positions in our community and in our State.

WATERS OF THE UNITED STATES

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, yesterday, the House Agriculture Subcommittee on Conservation, Energy, and Forestry, which I chair, held a hearing to review the definition of the "waters of the United States" proposed rule and its impact on rural America.

Enacted in 1972, the Clean Water Act established a Federal-State partnership to protect our Nation's navigable waterways; however, despite strong opposition from Congress and the public, the Obama administration has taken upon itself to redefine the Clean Water Act's jurisdictional waters. The EPA's proposed rule could have serious consequences for rural America and the Nation's economy.

Yesterday, members of the House Committee on Agriculture asserted that the administration has acted on its own, without input from the States and stakeholders, to broaden the scope of the Clean Water Act, threatening the livelihood of farmers, ranchers, and rural America.

It is my hope that yesterday's hearing will spur the administration to pull

the rule and consult with the States and stakeholders first or repropose the rule and allow a new round of public comment.

Mr. Speaker, there is too much on the line to continue down the current path.

ADDRESSING THE WEALTH GAP

(Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, today, I have introduced the addressing the wealth gap resolution which calls on Congress to recognize the wealth gap and the racial wealth gap as national economic crises and focus its efforts on their elimination.

This country is facing the widest wealth gap since 1983. The statistics are alarming. Wealthy families make nearly seven times as much as middle class families and 70 times as much as lower class families. African Americans have 13 times and Latinos have 10 times less wealth than White households. White households have \$100,000 more in retirement savings than African Americans and Latinos.

The cause of the record-level wealth gap stems from a structural crisis that started well before the Great Recession. The recession hit, and the housing market collapsed and made everything worse.

In the aftermath, middle-income families and people of color have had to endure income inequality, slow wage growth, skyrocketing student loans, and continued unequal access to quality education and barriers to the housing market. These are problems that widened the gap and require Congress to implement pragmatic solutions.

We cannot sit idly by and expect things to change. This is why I am introducing the addressing the wealth gap resolution. The first step to resolving this problem is acknowledging that it exists, and I encourage all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join and focus on the goal of rebuilding wealth in America.

CONGRESSIONAL PROGRESSIVE CAUCUS: THE PEOPLE'S BUDGET

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. KATKO). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentlewoman from New Jersey (Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I am here today representing the Congressional Progressive Caucus and to discuss our budget, the people's budget. I pray that I am not the only one that is speaking for the 60 minutes allotted.

Yesterday, Mr. Speaker, the House of Representatives released their budget proposal. Although they have a new chairman, they are following the same

game plan: privatize Medicare, slash spending on safety net programs, and hope that tax cuts for the rich trickle down from top earners to the rest of the country.

That is not what the American people need. They need a plan that levels the playing field, that gives them an opportunity to succeed, and puts their interests above the interests of corporations and the wealthy. They need a budget that is of the people, by the people, and for the people. That is what we are offering in the people's budget.

If you need a way to pay for affordable child care while you are at your job, we have got it in the people's budget. If you need access to quality education for your children, teachers that are trained to give them the knowledge they need to be great, we have got it in the people's budget.

If you worked hard to get into college but now need a way to pay for your tuition, we have got it in the people's budget. If you can't make ends meet, if the pay you take home barely keeps a roof over your head and you are making important choices between food and shelter and you are looking for a livable wage, we have got it in the people's budget.

Mr. Speaker, in the hands of the GOP, this Congress has offered tax break after tax break after tax break after tax break for corporations and billionaires while cutting the very programs that working Americans rely on to pull themselves up the economic ladder that has given generations of American families access to the middle class.

If anyone deserves a tax cut, it is not millionaires. It is the folks that are loading the trucks, the folks that are scanning the groceries, the folks that are cleaning the office buildings, the folks that are working as clerks, the folks that are working as secretaries, and the folks that are doing the important service jobs that our society so needs.

The people's budget would invest in priorities that will keep the American people strong, just for everyone. It offers jobs that will restore our middle class. It addresses our Nation's most pressing challenges, issues like climate change, aging transportation infrastructure, access to education at every level, and good-paying jobs.

This, Mr. Speaker, is about restoring Congress' commitment to serving hard-working Americans who are playing by the rules but still not getting ahead. This, Mr. Speaker, is about the lives that regular Americans are able to live.

Some say that it is not hard to find any old job and get a paycheck, but does that job offer a high enough wage or enough hours to pay the rent? Can you take time off for illness or to take care of your kids? Do you know that you will have enough to pay for child care while you are at the job? Do you have health insurance in the event that you need it?

My Congressional Progressive Caucus colleagues and I think that taxpaying Americans deserve to confidently answer "yes" to all of these questions, and that is what we are fighting for.

Today, we were given the distinct opportunity to present tenets of our budget to a group of interested people—everyday working people—people who are working for decent-paying jobs.

They are not looking for handouts. They are looking for recognition that they are part of this American Dream, and it is our responsibility to ensure that we are not impediments, but that we are facilitators of that American Dream for everyone.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I yield to my colleague, the chairman of the Progressive Caucus, Congressman ELLISON.

Mr. ELLISON. Let me thank the gentlewoman for yielding, the Congresswoman from New Jersey, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN.

As I said earlier today, BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN may have just got sworn in as a Member of Congress a few months ago, but she is no stranger to fighting for people.

That was on full display when she spoke at a rollout of our Progressive Caucus budget where she talked about how you can look at any aspect of the Progressive Caucus budget and you will find the same thing in every place: prioritizing people, making sure people can get their needs met in this government, making sure that workers can get access to a job, making sure that people who are sick but who are working can actually get a sick day so that they don't bring that sickness back to their workplace and don't have to abandon their children that might be sick, too.

You pointed out, Congresswoman WATSON COLEMAN, the fact is that job creation should be the primary metric of any budget. How are we doing putting people back to work in good jobs? How are we helping take care of them while they are on the job? If they are sick, can they take time off? How are we educating people? You focused on the key elements of the Progressive Caucus budget, and I was proud to hear you do it.

The fact is this is our fifth budget that we have put out. It is a budget that is about working people. That is why we call it the people's budget. We urge people to check out the people's budget online at the Congressional Progressive Caucus Web site.

Let me name a few things about the Progressive Caucus budget that are important to highlight. It creates 8.4 million good-paying jobs by 2018.

Now, you just take the Republican budget that was put out yesterday. It was interesting to me that none of my Republican colleagues wanted to tout how many jobs their budget would create, how many jobs the economists—after looking at the Republican budget proposed—would create because that is not what they consider to be a priority;